

FINAL REPORT

Back the Bay Public Awareness Campaign:
582-16-62004



A PROGRAM OF THE TCEQ

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**WHAT HAPPENS
IN HOUSTON ENDS UP
IN GALVESTON BAY.**

Figure 1 - Campaign tag line

Introduction

In 2009, the GBEP released *Charting the Course to 2015: Galveston Bay Strategic Action Plan (SAP)*, a reassessment of the 1995 *Galveston Bay Plan (The Plan)*, the comprehensive conservation and management plan. While developing the SAP, stakeholders and partners ranked public awareness/stewardship as the second highest priority for the GBEP—habitat conservation being the number one priority. In 2010, through a stakeholder lead initiative, the GBEP developed a regional public stewardship campaign, called Back the Bay, to increase public awareness and education about Galveston Bay. The campaign offers ways for residents to learn about the benefits of and their connection to our region's most valuable natural resource. The campaign also features conservation tips that benefit the bay. The campaign is used to reinforce implementation of *The Plan's* priorities. This specifically includes: watershed-based, water-quality-improvement initiatives; habitat conservation; and water conservation.

The campaign is comprehensive in nature and included two initial phases. The first phase started with a pre-research project (Summer 2010), a pilot program project in a limited geographical region (Summer 2011), and post-pilot research (Summer 2011). These projects developed and tested campaign messages, creative and other tactics, and a campaign plan. The second phase began in the spring of 2012, and expanded to the entire five-county region. The campaign partners with local governments, municipalities, nonprofit and citizen organizations who help carry the message to their constituents to leverage outreach and education opportunities.

In 2017, the campaign continued with a contract that ran from January 9 through August 31, 2017. The primary goal of this campaign is to increase the awareness of Galveston Bay's value among residents, commercial and residential developers, local governments and land owners, and emphasize to the public that their backyard is connected to the bay. The secondary goal is to educate target publics about each of the challenges and associated behaviors affecting the bay's future productivity as well as to change target publics' behaviors through a comprehensive, multi-phase public education and outreach campaign. These goals are addressed through the campaign's general message of "What happens in Houston ends up in Galveston Bay."

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Project Background and Significance

The Back the Bay campaign aims to improve the environmental quality of Galveston Bay by increasing awareness about the bay's value among the public. The campaign educates citizens in the Houston-Galveston region and focuses on three main goals of improving water quality, conserving water, and protecting critical fish and wildlife habitats. Because the campaign started in 2010 after stakeholders identified lack of public awareness and public stewardship as one of the biggest threats to preserving Galveston Bay, this project is unique in that it engages stakeholders in the creative process to help design the outreach materials, website, public service announcements, video and digital materials as well as helping to identify key audiences. The GBEP has included

stakeholders and partners in the planning and execution of the campaign throughout the entire process.

In 2016-2017, stakeholders identified trash and marine debris as a priority issue, and the campaign's theme and updated messaging and creative assets were designed with that in consideration. This message also aligned with the EPA's Trash Free Waters initiative.

Contract background

Texas Creative was selected through a Request for Bid solicitation issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in fiscal year 2016 to develop and implement the Back the Bay campaign. A Purchase Order with Texas Creative was executed January 2017 and ended August 31, 2017. Work tasks, deliverables, and associated funding to carry out specific tasks are encumbered and executed through a work order.

Campaign Development and Results

Through extensive stakeholder involvement and the results of the previous campaign efforts, Texas Creative worked with the GBEP to develop a campaign plan that includes information on barriers to behavior change, primary and secondary audiences, key decision makers, branding, messaging, message delivery options, and partnership opportunities. The campaign plan is adaptable and included measurable goals and objectives.

The Public Participation and Education subcommittee, a subcommittee of the GBEP management council, set trash and plastic pollution outreach and education as a goal of the PPE in 2016. The committee was involved in developing the types of communication and target audiences for the campaign.

Texas Creative used the PPE and GBEP input to develop a plan. The campaign objective was to create awareness of the positive quality-of-life benefits that a healthy Galveston Bay provides for the entire Houston-Galveston region. The area of focus was Harris, Galveston, Brazoria, Liberty, and Chambers counties. The primary audience was adults 18-34 who are not aware of the storm drain connection to Galveston Bay but are more likely to change habits. Secondary audience was adults 35-54 who are aware of the storm drain connection to the bay and would help carry the message. These audience selections are based on the previous research and campaign plan from 2010-2015.

Stakeholders felt the messages of the campaign need to highlight that Galveston Bay provides several positive quality-of-life benefits for the entire Houston / Galveston area. However, a barrier to changing behaviors is low awareness of the impact pollution has on Galveston Bay and surrounding waterbodies. Based on previous research, those who do not live close by do not feel connected to Galveston Bay, so there is a low awareness of Galveston Bay's benefits for the surrounding communities. This also leads to a lack of understanding as to why the health of Galveston Bay is important.

Message focus for the campaign was marine debris, plastic pollution, and water quality.

Creative assets produced



Figure 2 - TV spot production

TV spots

For the 2017 campaign, Texas Creative developed three new TV spots, each were 30-seconds. Each spot highlighted trash and marine debris in three different scenarios.

Colorful Sites

The message highlight of this spot is, “Our bayous and bay are full of colorful sights, trash shouldn’t be one of them.” In this spot, the view is from a kayak perspective and trash is seen floating around the kayak.



Figure - 3 Kayak TV spot screen shot

Don't Trash a Good Thing

This spot's message is, "Runoff of from our bayous flows directly into Galveston Bay. What happens in Houston... ends up in Galveston Bay." This spot focused on a storm drain, and you can see and hear trash being blown into a storm drain. A message comes up that says, "This is not a trash can."



Figure 4 - Storm drain TV spot screen shot

The Big Catch

The third TV spot included a message that said, "This catch should be in a trash can, not on your wall. What happens in Houston... ends up in Galveston Bay." This spot featured what looked like a trophy catch, but instead of wildlife, it is a plastic soda bottle on a wall mount.



Figure 5 - Trophy TV spot screen shot

You can view the videos on the Back the Bay website: <https://backthebay.org/videos/>

Radio spots

Two new radio spots were created, and based on stakeholder feedback, the campaign developed a radio spot translated into Spanish.

Website update

The website was updated to give a new and more dynamic, engaging look with the new campaign tagline “What Happens in Houston, Ends up in Galveston Bay.” The Interactive Tour was added to the top of the page to highlight that tool.

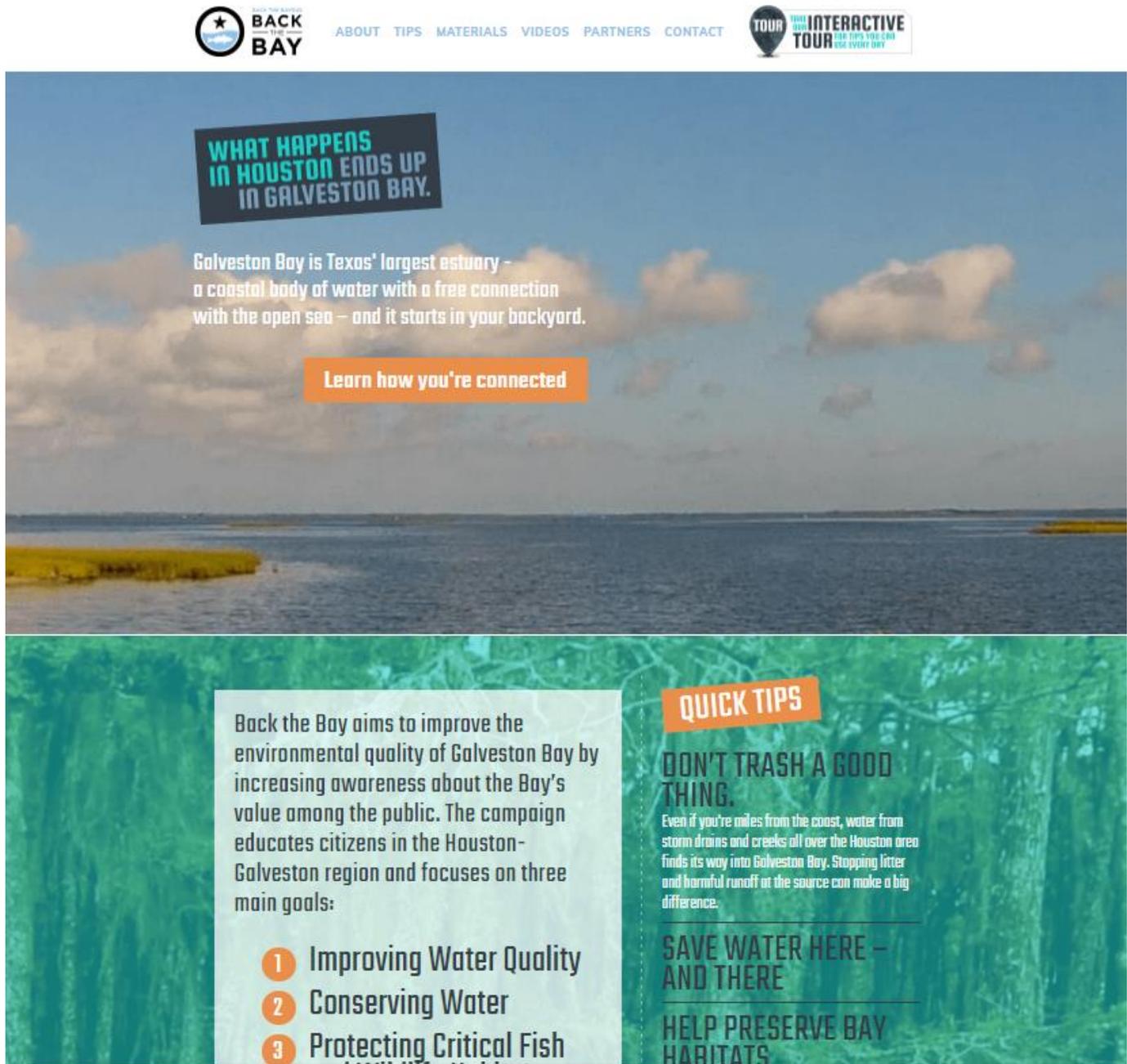


Figure 6 - Screen shot of front page of updated website

All the current TV spots were added, and the “Tips” page was updated. A “Featured Event” section was added to the bottom of the page, and a link to partner program *Get Out Here Houston* was added. This link directs people to information about outdoors events, hiking, boating, birdwatching, and other outdoor opportunities in the Greater Houston-Galveston region. Finally, links to partners and resources were updated.



Figure 7 - Reusable canvas tote bag

Re-usable tote bags and stickers

Updated re-usable tote bags were created to give people an alternative to using single-use plastic bags. And the campaign stickers were reproduced.



Figure 8 - Campaign stickers

Media and Community Relations highlights

The paid media ran for 6 weeks from June 19, 2017 through July 30, 2017. Media buys were purchased from fourteen television stations and thirteen radio stations, including Spanish language media. Specific outlets are identified in the following table. Total impressions were 19 million.

TV Stations	Radio Stations
KPRC-TV NBC – Channel 2	KAMA-FM Spanish Hits
KHOU-TV CBS – Channel 11	KBME-AM Sports
KRIV-TV FOX – Channel 26	KLTN-FM Regional Mexican
KIAH-TV CW – Channel 39	KNTH-AM Talk
KUBE-TV IND – Channel 57	KODA-FM Soft AC
KTXH-TV MyNET – Channel 20	KOVE-FM Spanish Adult Hits
Comcast stations: E!, FX, MTV, Adult Swim, VH1, BET, Comedy, and Spike	KPRC-AM Talk
	KQBT-FM Urban Contemporary
	KQBU-FM Regional Mexican
	KTBZ-FM Modern Rock
	KTRH-AM News/Talk
	KUHF-FM NPR (digital banner)
	Pandora – English and Spanish (digital)

The total budget spent on media was \$175,022.29, and the total added value of each media outlet providing additional spots was leveraged at \$132,334.00 for a total of 609 spots that ran on the various TV, radio, and digital outlets.

2017 Back the Bay Added Value Recap

TV	Spots	Total AV Value
Comcast	44	\$5,280.00
Comcast 9726	39	\$741.00
KIAH	30	\$3,300.00
KRIV	39	\$5,265.00
KTXH	63	\$4,410.00
KUBE	139	\$5,560.00
NPRC	130	\$1,950.00
KPRC (spot upgrades)		\$2,250.00
TV TOTAL	484	\$28,756.00
RADIO	Spots	Total AV Value
KUHF	96	\$12,576.00
TTWN	513	\$79,002.00
Pandora (1.2MM Imps)	-	\$12,000.00
RADIO TOTAL	609	\$103,578.00
TOTAL Added Value		\$132,334.00
TOTAL Budget		\$175,022.29

Outreach event

The campaign hosted a *Back the Bay Day* at the Houston Zoo on Saturday, August 12, 2017. Eight partner organizations participated in *Back the Bay Day* collaborating to highlight the work being done in the region to protect wildlife and water quality from trash and plastic pollution. The following partner organizations were represented at the event.

- Houston Audubon
- American Bird Conservancy
- Houston-Galveston Area Council
- Audubon Texas
- Galveston Bay Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists
- Houston Zoo, plastic pollution education team members
- Turtle Island Restoration Network
- Galveston Bay Estuary Program

7,300 people visited the zoo the day of the event. The zoo provided a spot for partner booths in the front of the zoo so visitors could engage with each group as they entered the facility. The partners directly engaged with nearly 300 visitors who learned how they can be a part of protecting the region's natural resources. 81 people



Figure 9 - Partners talking about Back the Bay Day event on KPRC's Houston Life segment

signed a pledge to do a cleanup in their community and share photos and data on the amount and type of trash and plastic they picked up. At the Back the Bay table, a Cub Scout volunteer taught people how to turn t-shirts provided by Trash Bash into reusable tote bags. 30 people took the time to create their own t-shirt bag at the Back the Bay table.

This outreach event created a new partnership with the Houston Zoo that will help spread the Back the Bay message to an even wider audience. In 2016, the zoo welcomed a record 2.55 million visitors to make it the most-visited destination in Houston. With nine years of consecutive attendance growth, the Houston Zoo continues as the second most-visited zoo in the United States, with attendance only

exceeded by the San Diego Zoo. The Houston zoo is actively engaged in the region doing litter cleanups, attending outreach events, and engaging with zoo visitors/volunteers about plastic pollution and marine debris daily. The zoo expressed a desire to make the Back the Bay day a yearly event and reaching out to additional organizations.

All partners who participated provided positive feedback in a follow-up survey and expressed their desire to continue to be a part of any future Back the Bay day events.

Beyond providing the space for partner booths, the zoo helped advertise the event through their social media outlets and their website. One week before the event, partners were invited to film a live segment focusing on Back the Bay campaign messages on KPRC's Houston Life, Houston's number one mid-day, local entertainment show. The Galveston Bay Foundation spoke about their pollution reporting tool called the Galveston Bay Action Network, which allows citizens to report several types of pollution including trash and marine debris. Houston Audubon spoke about their education and outreach opportunities and brought a guest along, a Mississippi kite raptor named "Skeeter." And the Houston Zoo shared information about their Sea Lion team who does monthly trash cleanups on Galveston Island, and provides daily education opportunities with their interpretive sea lion exhibit.



Figure 10 - Web banner



Figure 11 - Web banner

KPRC-TV digital media outreach—which included online, Web, and mobile application banners for the event (see Figures 10 and 11)—garnered 540,000 impressions. The Houston Life Segment coupled with a seven-second TV spot specifically produced to advertise the zoo event earned 940,000 impressions.



Figure 13 - Boy Scout volunteer



Figure 12 - T-shirt bag demonstration

Conclusion

Back the Bay is a unique public awareness campaign because it engaged stakeholders and partners throughout the entire process. From the previous 2010-2015 campaign development, to the 2017 implementation, the Galveston Bay Council, each of the subcommittees, and the GBEP staff have all been involved in developing campaign messages and all creative assets. Significant time was spent talking with the public through one-on-one meetings, focus groups, outreach events, and presentations to understand awareness levels and what the barriers to behavior changes were to determine the tone and breadth of the campaign messages. The results of which is a public awareness campaign that is multidimensional and adaptive depending on the audience, the awareness levels, and the issue being addressed.

The feedback from stakeholders, council, and subcommittees throughout the process has been very positive. TCEQ management and communications has also been an integral part of the campaign development and design and have been supportive throughout the endeavor.

The council, subcommittees, partners, and TCEQ are in support of continuing the campaign. Through the initial pilot phase of the campaign, it was determined that a broad general awareness level of the bay and the value of its natural resources was the starting point for the campaign. Moving forward beyond 2017, the GBEP will continue to work with stakeholders, the TCEQ, and the EPA to develop more targeted messages and materials with specific actions people can take to protect and preserve the bay for generations to come.